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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7447
INFO RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0959
RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE
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SIPDIS
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SUBJECT: IOM/Chad: Tonneau meetings with Chadian Officials;
Progress on Resettlement Capacity; No signed MOU yet.

REF: N'DJAMENA 469

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) Michele Tonneau, Geneva-based Chief of Movement Management Division, Operations Support Department for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) visited Chad from November 2-6 to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Chad on behalf of IOM. Due to the unexpected unavailability of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tonneau left without a signed MOU. However, IOM did hold productive meetings with government and international organization officials in both N'Djamena and Abeche. The Accra and N'Djamena Refcoords met with IOM and discussed progress on establishing resettlement operations, and Accra-based Refugee Coordinator accompanied IOM to Abeche. The government officials at various levels stressed the importance of security and information campaigns. END SUMMARY.

MEETING LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OUADDAI;
IOM IS NOT ANOTHER ZOE'S ARC

2. (SBU) Accra-based Refugee Coordinator, Michel Tonneau, IOM Regional Operations Officer William Lorenz and acting Chief of Mission for IOM Chad/Senior Regional Medical Officer Qasim Sufi travelled to Abeche, Chad on November 5. The group met with Delegate for the Ouaddai region of the National Commission for the Welcome and Reinsertion of Refugees (Commission Nationale d'Accueil et de Reinsertion des Refugies -- "CNAR"), Mr. Hassan Ali Osman; the recently-installed Governor of Ouaddai region, Mr. Kedallah Younous Hamid; the Deputy Governor of Ouaddai region, Mr. Djako Tamaga; and the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (DSRSG), Ms. Rima Salah. Refcoord was unable to attend the MINURCAT meeting. Although in separate meetings, the CNAR delegate, Deputy Governor and Governor each delivered a uniform message: they support refugee resettlement and believe that a large-scale program is feasible, as long as appropriate security measures are taken. They noted that a sensitization and information campaign is necessary as a security measure, particularly to combat misinformation and to ensure that resettlement is not mistaken for trafficking or "another Zoe's Arc." They suggested that the sensitization and training of

the CNAR staff members include visits to resettlement sites in the U.S. so they can fully understand the program.

13. (SBU) The group also visited the refugee transit center in Abeche, currently housing the remaining 60 refugees approved for resettlement under the pilot program underway during the past year and waiting for final clearances before travel to the US. Non-functioning or ill-functioning water standpipes and pumps had been repaired (Reftel) providing an appropriate supply of water.

GOC-IOM MOU

14. (SBU) The primary objective of Tonneau's visit was to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the government of Chad. Negotiations on the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between IOM and the GoC had already been completed. The MOU was to establish IOM's official presence in Chad, confer diplomatic privileges and immunities, and establish protocols with the government. The MOU was to be a precursor to Chad membership in IOM (for which IOM anticipates the GoC will make a formal request in January). The signing had been scheduled with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to take place at the beginning of Tonneau's visit. However, the signing was repeatedly postponed and Tonneau departed without having signed the MOU. No official reason was given, and there are no indications that there are any concerns over the MOU. The signing has not yet been rescheduled and it is not certain who will sign on behalf of IOM.

15. (SBU) IOM's work in Chad will continue despite the absence of an MOU and the resultant diplomatic status. However, several key actions will be delayed. IOM has been waiting for its diplomatic

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status to submit an official written request to government officials in Abeche to obtain land for a refugee transit center with a capacity to house up to 1,000 refugees (much larger than the current site) and a possible site for the office and residential compound (as a possible alternative to building at the current transit center site). Construction would need to begin before the end of the calendar year in order to have operational facilities for group resettlement processing by spring 2010. The MOU is also necessary for IOM to officially name a Chief of Mission and have IOM begin to operate autonomously, where they currently rely on the good offices of UNDP or UNHCR. The MOU and diplomatic status would also clarify IOM's presence in Chad in advance of information campaigns.

IOM PROGRESS IN ESTABLISHING
OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

16. (SBU) IOM has made some progress in improving their capacity in Chad (Reftel). The existing international staff includes an Acting Officer in Charge, Security Officer, and two Operations Officers. Over the next week, the staff will be joined by a Senior Operations Officer, IT officer, and Senior Accountant. While some positions had been filled prior to Tonneau's visit, Tonneau was actively calling and recruiting other individuals to serve in Chad.

COMMENT

17. (SBU) Given the uniformity of the statements during the separated meetings with GoC officials in Abeche, it is possible that all three received talking points from CNAR Secretary General Mahamat Nour Abdoulaye. We do agree that security is paramount and an information campaign is planned. At the same time, we need to recognize that some officials' requests may be driven by a desire for attention and perks, such as international travel. In later stages of refugee resettlement processing, it may be possible for some CNAR officials to visit the U.S. as part of the program, following a model used in other resettlement programs. Where appropriate and possible, IOM may employ such individuals to escort resettlement flights. End comment.

18. (SBU) Craig Murphy, the incoming Senior Operations Officer, was formerly employed at the Joint Voluntary Agencies in Nairobi, and most recently has been working for IOM based in Amman and managing the Overseas Processing Entity in Baghdad. He thus appears to have experience in logistically complex environments with security challenges. The arrival of the accounting and IT officers will help establish the physical plant and allow IOM to move from a hotel to a proper office. We will continue to monitor IOM's progress in establishing and improving their resettlement processing capacity in Chad.

19. (U) Minimize considered.

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